

Alderbrook School

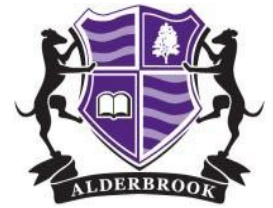
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Dear Parents/Carers

You may be aware that the government has now updated its guidance to schools on face coverings. The guidance states that:

'Schools and colleges will have the discretion to require face coverings in communal areas where social distancing cannot be safely managed, if they believe that it is right in their particular circumstances.'

We are confident that our safety measures mitigate risks associated with transmission of the virus but understand that a face covering may offer students and their families as well as our own staff additional confidence as we return to school.

At the time of writing, in line with current guidance, we will not mandate that everyone has to wear a mask. If this changes, our approach will be modified accordingly. Our concern is, as always, the health and safety of everyone in the school community and will therefore take the following approach:

We have introduced a one-way system in school to limit movement around school. However, students and staff may feel an increased sense of confidence wearing a face covering in corridors at lesson changeover.

It is essential that face coverings are worn safely and students are discouraged from touching their face and wearing a mask that is not clean. This would be detrimental to the health and safety of the child. When removing a mask, students should wash their hands first then place the mask in a sealable, plastic bag for storage, reversing the process when putting it back on. If your child does choose to wear a mask in school, please send them with a suitable bag to store it in for times when it is not in use.

Students' face coverings should be of a suitable design, plain if possible, avoiding contentious wording or graphics. We will be reinforcing messages in school about the safe use of face coverings and further guidance can be found from the government here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

Please take the time to go through the following extract from the government guidance in particular with your child before they return to school next week:

When wearing a face covering you should:

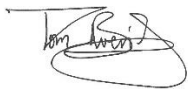
- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on
- avoid wearing on your neck or forehead
- avoid touching the part of the face covering in contact with your mouth and nose, as it could be contaminated with the virus
- change the face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it
- avoid taking it off and putting it back on a lot in quick succession (for example, when leaving and entering shops on a high street)

When removing a face covering:

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before removing
- only handle the straps, ties or clips
- do not give it to someone else to use
- if single-use, dispose of it carefully in a residual waste bin and do not recycle
- if reusable, wash it in line with manufacturer's instructions at the highest temperature appropriate for the fabric
- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser once removed

These are challenging times and guidance is changing rapidly. There is also lots of media attention on schools at the moment as we prepare to reopen. We are very keen that students do not feel anxious about their return to the classroom and we are working very hard to ensure that our provision is both safe and welcoming for our young people next week. We will keep you updated with any further changes as things evolve.

With best wishes



Tom Beveridge
Headteacher